



Participants at the Gardening for Wildlife Watershed tour.

Award Amount
\$608,132

Watershed
Multiple Bay Area Watersheds

County
Contra Costa, Alameda, and San Mateo Counties

CALFED Region
Bay Region

Legislative Districts
US Congress: 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 14
State Assembly: 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20 and 21
State Senate: 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11

Purpose

Develop and expand community watershed awareness programs to support informed watershed management decisions.

Project Goals

- Provide support for Bay Area citizen-based creek and watershed groups.
- Foster strong community watershed programs to support improved watershed management.
- Present watershed education material and workshops to develop community involvement in reducing adverse impacts on water quality and restoring the ecosystem.
- Implement Gardening for Wildlife workshops to provide residents with information on how to incorporate native plants into their home gardens, eliminate pesticides, conserve water, and reduce green waste.

Benefits to the CALFED Program

This project is achieving the Bay Delta Program's goals of improving water quality, increasing water use efficiency, and restoring habitat in the San Francisco Bay by creating partnerships with a wide variety of agencies, groups, and individuals interested in improving environmental health in the Bay Area, and by supporting outreach programs that lead directly to citizen involvement in the health of local watersheds. AOI's programs educate and involve citizens and local government in local restoration projects and water quality monitoring and engage the community in efforts to reduce water use and pesticide runoff by educating them about gardening with native species.

Project Overview

The Aquatic Outreach Institute (AOI) involves teachers and other members of the public in educating the community to encourage water quality and ecosystem protection and water conservation. AOI fosters partnerships and helps promote watershed awareness and stewardship. AOI's Citizen Involvement and Regional Outreach Program consists of four components, which involve outreach to educators, students, and the general public in Contra Costa, Alameda, and San Mateo Counties.

Support for Specific Creek Groups. AOI provides support for local Watershed Awareness Programs in the form of publicity, meeting organization and facilitation, newsletter publication, restoration project coordination, and other support.

Regional Support for Bay Area Citizen-Based Creek and Watershed Groups. The Regional Project Assistance Grant Program offers local groups service grants to support education, capacity building, and event coordination. AOI also coordinates regional events, publishes a regional newsletter "Creeks Speak," and is developing web-based resources.

Watershed Education Workshops. AOI provides additional support for teachers and students involved in "Kids in Creeks," "Kids in Gardens," and "Watching Our Watersheds" workshops; participants receive classroom visits, referrals, grant-writing assistance, and other resources. Through these workshops and follow-up, thousands of students each year learn about pollution prevention, organic gardening, watershed ecosystems, and other topics.

Gardening for Wildlife Program. This program includes workshops, restoration workdays, and watershed walks/plant collection events designed to interest gardeners in incorporating native plants into their gardens, reducing chemical inputs, and conserving water.



Volunteers work to clean up the area around Baxter Creek.

Contact Information

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